A YEAR FROM THE COLLECTION, CIRCA 1952

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COLLECTION IN CONTEXT

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

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Front and back covers, clockwise from upper left, details of:
Stuart Davis, *Owh! In San Pañ*, 1951; **David Burliuk**, *St. Mark's Place*, 1951–52; **Adolph Gottlieb**, *Unstill Life*, 1952; **Attilio Salemme**, *Inquisition*, 1952; **Richard Lindner**, *The Child's Dream*, 1952

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The "Collection in Context" exhibition series provides a forum for opening diverse perspectives on the Whitney Museum's Permanent Collection. One feature of the series is to invite scholars, artists, and curators to present different viewpoints on the collection. For "A Year from the Collection, Circa 1952," we are pleased to publish an essay by Karal Ann Marling, professor of art history and American studies at the University of Minnesota, which colorfully characterizes the contradictions and complexities of art and life in 1952.

Another aspect of the series is the exploration of various methods of exhibition presentation itself. The first "Collection in Context" exhibition highlighted a small body of works by Edward Hopper. The second focused on a single masterpiece by Arshile Gorky. In contrast, this exhibition casts a wide net, displaying roughly seventy works by sixty artists, which together define the range of the Museum's collection at a specific historical moment. The installation itself, with works displayed "salon style" and on a storage screen, offers a glimpse of the Whitney's vast holdings.

By displaying an edited but representative selection of paintings, sculptures, and works on paper produced in and around 1952, we hope that viewers will appreciate the diversity of coexisting styles and make their own stylistic, cultural, and qualitative judgments about the works. A museum's purpose is to articulate and clarify the significance of the art in its collection. In this context, the museum should present the full flowering of artistic creation before it has been radically reduced to a few outstanding artists and styles. Furthermore, to appreciate singular works of "greatness," one must become aware of the contemporaneous artistic achievements that make "greatness" both possible and discernible.

Adam D. Weinberg, Curator, Permanent Collection

A YEAR FROM THE COLLECTION, CIRCA 1952

The year 1952 marked the twenty-first anniversary of the Whitney Museum of American Art. Wildenstein's held a big loan exhibition of twentieth-century American paintings to "celebrate [the Museum's] coming of age." The selection committee was made up of critics from the New York art press, New York's major dailies, and the powerful Time, Inc.—both *Time* and *Life* magazines were represented. The proceeds went to a special fund out of which works by living American artists were to be purchased for the Permanent Collection. The only proviso was that the money had to be spent within the year. In effect, the panel of critics sent the Whitney on a shopping spree. The curators were instructed to buy whatever it took to make the collection "reflect what is best and most significant" in modern American art.

The critics offered some helpful clues, to be sure, in their own selections of the best American art had to offer: one brand new black-and-white Pollock, three de Koonings (the *Art Digest* contingent had chosen a canvas from the controversial Woman series), two Wyeths, three jazzy Davises done in the thirties and forties, and two Tobeys, one recent, one not. But John Marin and Edward Hopper were the hands-down favorites. Coexisting peacefully on the walls of Wildenstein's East 64th Street galleries, the Marins and the Hoppers acknowledged, or rather celebrated, a rift between modernism and traditional picture-making that went back to the Armory Show of 1913.

The 1952 anniversary show was about Marins and Hoppers, about options and choices and divergent tastes. The realists of the Ashcan-turned-Regionalist past were represented, even though it was fashionable in liberal circles to dismiss the latter as so many corn-fed Fascists; in 1938, in fact, dissenters from the modernist camp had mounted an anti-Whitney exhibition to protest the Museum's purported use of "non-esthetic standards—geographic...or narrative" in choosing the best in American art. The symbol of the silo (a.k.a. Regionalism), the protesters claimed, was in the ascendancy at the Whitney. By 1952, of course, silos were distinctly passé. But Grant Wood was in the loan show anyway, along with Baziotes, Glarner, and Lee Gatch, all familiar figures in the closed circles of early 1950s abstraction in New York. Iowa and Manhattan; pictures of Midwestern farmers and "action paintings" of nothing anybody could put a name to: the anniversary exhibition espoused a cheerful eclecticism, a deliberate unorthodoxy. "Change and diversity are signs of vitality and growth," the catalogue insisted.

Besides, orthodoxy was no guarantee of making sense of the art world. In 1948, *Life* had conducted a roundtable discussion among fifteen prominent connoisseurs and critics on the subject of modern art and how the average reader should respond to unfamiliar images of "human figures and objects that 'look wrong.'" The participants contrived to make Cubism (and a host of other

isms of the recent past) seem Old Masterish. But things fell apart when the group turned its collective gaze to contemporary American art. Nobody, according to the editors, could state the reasons for their likes and dislikes with any clarity. It was all disconcertingly subjective. Clement Greenberg, ideological high priest of Abstract Expressionism, thought Jackson Pollock's *Cathedral* was "one of the best paintings recently produced in this country." Others conceded that the Pollock might make a nice pattern for wallpaper or yardgoods but saw nothing of the oppositional angst—the outsiderness—that lent authenticity to the new American painting in the eyes of its fervent promoters.

Being fiercely alienated (or having somebody else say you were) wasn't enough to qualify as a great American artist in 1952 either. The *Partisan Review*'s symposium on American culture that spring and summer concluded that there actually was some (U.S. culture, that is), whereas before the war, there wasn't. Nobody was quite sure what had happened in the interim, but the writers, at least, were eager to be a part of the new, prosperous postwar America. Although the intellectuals assembled by the journal to debate the relationship between mass culture and the tradition of nonconformity never mentioned a painter or a sculptor by name, they did conclude that "most writers no longer accept alienation as the artist's fate in America." One of the experts, author and critic Louis Kronenberger, went so far as to accuse highbrows with exalted views of the heroic artist of harboring low, middlebrow tastes: they worship "'major' art exactly as America, generally, worships size," he sniffed.

If painters went in for big canvases, fraught with significance, a number of up-and-coming writers were also engaged in a bitter contest to produce *the* big book, the Great American Novel. Norman Mailer, one of the few *Partisan Review* intellectuals skeptical about making peace with popular culture, was nonetheless a strong contender for the title. But Ernest Hemingway made a surprise bid in September 1952, when *Life* reprinted *The Old Man and the Sea* alongside an editorial discussing literary symbolism and the "nobility of man." Papa Hemingway was the very picture of the Great American Writer: big, noisy, photogenic, virile—an older prototype for the blue-jeaned Jackson Pollock profiled in *Life* in 1949. Hemingway's syntax was direct, primitive, and American, too—like Pollock's unpremeditated drips.

Although it was hard to be sure if a given Pollock was wallpaper for a bathroom in Levittown or the pinnacle of Western Civilization, Hemingway's book fairly dripped with big, all-encompassing messages about humankind and courage, couched in symbols as ancient as the sea around us (the title of Rachel Carson's nonfiction bestseller of the same year). The sea. The fish. The boat. The man. "Why would anybody be interested in some old man who was a failure and never amounted to anything anyway?" wondered a member of Ike's cabinet. But the fifties were rife with portentous symbols

and toplofty sentiments: *The Robe*, in Cinemascope and Technicolor—the miracle of the Bible brought to the movie screen at hyperbolic scale; magazine ads for a packaging firm that extolled "The Great Ideas of Western Man" in pithy quotes and abstract art; the bomb; the Pollock drip, the undersea shapes by Baziotes, the invocation of ritual sacrifice by Jacques Lipchitz. The man alone, against the sea. Big. Deep.

America was so powerful, so rich after the war that anything seemed possible. Big questions about what it all meant—the new prosperity, the Cold War, the future of mankind—came naturally. If the United States had inherited the burden of Western Civilization from war-torn Europe, what should we *do* with it? Leave it to the tender mercies of GM and Coca-Cola and *Life*? Or say no to the philistines? "No Sunday-hobby,...no art history in America of ashcan-regional-WPA-pepsi-cola styles," as painter Ad Reinhardt neatly put it in 1952. Highbrows here. Middlebrows with their GI Bill diplomas and serialized novels there. And lowbrows with their paint-by-numbers kits and *Readers' Digest* condensed books over in some dim corner of the national consciousness, wondering what it all meant, too.

The problem with those neat categories was that the new common culture resisted rigid divisions of class and caste. *Anyone* could ask the big questions, along with Alistair Cooke: *Omnibus* made its TV debut in 1952, offering a menu of Greek tragedy and deep meaning. On April 2 and May 1, atomic test blasts were televised for the first time. Beginning that fall, Jack Webb and *Dragnet* weighed the facts of life and death and grand larceny in L.A.: "The story you are about to hear is true; only the names have been changed to protect the innocent."

What was true? What was real? Tangible things, that could be touched and seen on TV, and bought and sold? What passed for culture in America often turned out to be blatant, glitzy, soulless materialism. A devastating satire on the Cold War by sociologist David Riesman had the nation, in August 1952, well into the second year of a fictional "Nylon War" with the U.S.S.R. The conflict supposedly began with American bombers dropping payloads of stockings and Toni permanent wave kits on Soviet cities and soon escalated to freezers and vacuum cleaners raining down upon the bedazzled civilians of Moscow. In overseas trade fairs and government propaganda, consumer goods were interchangeable with weaponry. On the homefront, however, they were more often mixed up with art.

Life put pastel-tinted refrigerators on one page and Ernest Hemingway on the next. In 1952, alongside ads for "Colorvision" cake mix, Maidenform bras, "The Great Ideas of Western Man," and Toni wave kits, there were articles on hot new artists (New York's Downtown Gallery endorsed Herbert Katzman), how to reveal one's personality by the proper choice of paintings and appointments for the home (actress/sophisticate Nina Foch = African masks and a blurry canvas by Stamos), on Calder's mobiles, and ladies' trousers based on

motifs from famous paintings. A year earlier, a *Vogue* layout by Cecil Beaton had posed fashion models in the Betty Parsons Gallery, in front of the Jackson Pollocks, to set off the season's hot new evening wear. Whatever else art was, it was inextricably bound up with the lives that the majority of nervous, TV-watching, supermarket-going, *Life*-magazine-reading Americans lived in the 1950s.

Critical discourse on the arts ignored this audience. In the pages of *Life*'s forum on modern art, Greenberg had called the bank clerks and salesmen who flocked to the Met to see an exhibition of the Long Island genre paintings of William Sidney Mount "reprehensible" because they were interested in pictures that depicted places with which they were familiar. Nor were endorsements based on the flatness and improvisational existentialism of contemporary American art calculated to help the readers of *Life* relish works that seemed peculiar to the naked eye. But in describing radical new countertops and home furnishings not yet available in the stores, *House Beautiful* in 1952 identified a new American design principle called "Free Taste,"based on "free lines and brush strokes, asymmetrical spacing, [and] an abstract, rather than representational, approach." In *An American in Paris*, the blockbuster movie musical of 1951, Gene Kelly was an *artiste* who danced (gloriously!) more often than the camera caught him painting. And Winston Churchill, in a slender volume on Sunday painting that sold briskly in the United States throughout the fifties, espoused his own "splash and wallop technique" as a way of releasing pent-up anxiety and dealing with personal crises. Abstract Expressionism and Surrealism, in other words, both came packaged in do-it-yourself versions.



Fashion model in front of Jackson Pollock's *Lavender Mist: Number 1, 1950.* Photograph by Cecil Beaton for *Vogue*, March 1, 1951.

The creation of this impromptu popular aesthetic is not surprising, since the 1950s was a period of extraordinary visual sensibility. The full-page pictures in *Life* and *Look*. The moving image: TV (the CBS logo, an enormous

eye, appeared in 1951). Big-screen movies. Durable goods—cars, stoves, freezers —that came in outlandish models restyled each and every Labor Day. Two- and three-toned cars you could actually design yourself by choosing from an endless list of options and colors. Colored freezers. Pastel soap and toilet paper tinted to match the bathroom wallpaper. Hair dye for milady that complemented the interior of a convertible that had sprouted the first, tiny chrome-plated tail fins in 1948. 1952 was huge sculptural fins, shaped like fighter jets or weird, undersea creatures—mobiles made in Detroit. 1952 was *See It Now* with Edward R. Murrow, and "I Saw Mommy Kissin' Santa Claus." Everybody was looking.

And choosing. For the point of all the color and chrome and artistic detail was selling one particular bar of soap, a Ford car, a Betty Crocker cake mix. Choosing was also a pleasure in its own right—comparing one curve with another, judging the precise tonal quality of pinkness (Mrs. Eisenhower's favorite color) demanded by a given setting. Packaged exhibitions of American art sent abroad in the fifties under government auspices served to prove the point that American artists were free to choose whatever style they wished. Freedom of expression and freedom of choice were basic to the American way of life.

One of the best illustrations of the principle was the Whitney Annual, which celebrated its twentieth anniversary in the winter of 1952 with a show of paintings by 154 artists from twenty-four states, a quarter of whom were newcomers to the series (the sculpture, watercolor, and drawing section, held in the spring, was comparable in size). Henry Geldzahler recalled the excitement of seeing "in one large exhibition much of the best that was being produced along with the most stagnant, least provocative art imaginable. Thus the viewer was thrown into the healthful turmoil of doing what some consider the museum's job—of deciding, comparing, rejecting, and accepting...until ...he was able to find his own way to what constituted quality in contemporary American art."

Although Geldzahler pooh-poohs the underlying philosophy, the description is precisely right. Like the supermarket, the 1952 Whitney had all the latest brands, styles, and colors for the choosing. John Beauchamp. José de Rivera. Rico Lebrun. Charles White. John Wilde. John von Wicht. Jack Zuckerman. Leo Amino. Attilio Salemme. Robert Motherwell. Baziotes. Gatch. And Herbert Katzman, one of *Life*'s hot new American artists. A third of the pieces the Museum ultimately bought that year came from the roster of the two-part Annual.

There is a marked family resemblance among the contemporary works purchased in 1952. The new acquisitions included three Sloans, in tribute to that year's massive John Sloan retrospective curated by Lloyd Goodrich, and Stuart Davis' exuberant *Owh! in San Paõ* with its pop Benday dots and billboard letters. But the bulk of the work was neither realist, in the Sloan

manner, nor dependent on the heritage of American modernism, from which Davis made his leap of faith into the 1960s. There were biomorphic forms. Automotive and aerodynamic forms. Anguished figures. Everyman. The mother and child. Mild gestural canvases and canvases depicting gestures. Angles suggestive of boats, machinery, corporate office blocks on empty windswept plazas: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's new Lever House on Park Avenue opened in 1952. Mazes. Loneliness. Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd*. Injustice. Symbols. Big ideas. Deep thoughts. Shapes that Detroit and *House Beautiful* understood. *The Old Man and the Sea*.

The new purchases for 1952 mirrored the taste of the time without guile or apology. They were neither resistant to the blandishments of American popular culture nor opposed to its premises. Since 1952, however, the year has taken on a very different resonance at the Whitney, thanks to later acquisitions of a more conventionally museumlike character, works that exemplify a commonly accepted version of the history of art in the fifties from which those big ideas and deep thoughts are mainly absent. The holdings for circa 1952, for instance, now include early works by many important Pop Art figures who had not achieved much recognition at the time. Women have been added. And media other than painting, sculpture, and drawing. 1952 used to be a matter of men—"mankind"—who painted big canvases. Today, thanks to an injection of contemporary values and gifts to the Whitney, it looks a great deal more pluralistic. It looks more like 1994.

Whether either collection—the 1952 that was or the 1952 that is—fulfills the stated goal of the institution on its long-ago twenty-first anniversary, whether either collection represents "what is best and most significant" in modern American art, is the question this exhibition aims to put before the viewer.

Karal Ann Marling

Next page, clockwise from upper left:
Theodoros Stamos, *Greek Orison* (detail), 1952; **Federico Castellón**, *Untitled*, c. 1952; **Philip Evergood**, *Mom's Cathedral* (detail), c. 1951; **Esphyr Slobodkina**, *Composition with White Ovals*, 1952; **Stuart Davis**, *Owh! In San Paõ*, 1951






ELSE
Stuart Davis

TAKING INVENTORY: ART OF THE EARLY FIFTIES

> Yet I do not see how one can escape a central fact of twentieth-century American Art: that it is restless, fluid, experimental, constantly moving in new directions, constantly setting up counter-reactions and inducing cross-fertilizations. It would be astonishing if, out of all this passionate searching, only one path had creative merit. I do not believe it is true.
> – John I.H. Baur[1]

Seldom are we reminded that the art world of circa 1952 was a battleground of competing styles and artistic tendencies. According to most historical accounts of the moment, there was but one style worthy of discussion: Abstract Expressionism. As a manner of painting about big ideas, executed on big canvases by artists who, through increased media attention, appeared larger than life, Abstract Expressionism overshadowed a wide range of other styles, both established and emerging. Artists such as Willem de Kooning and Robert Motherwell debated "What Abstract Art Means to Me" at a 1951 symposium, and in the same year Jackson Pollock's drip paintings made their way into the popular press as backdrops for the latest women's fashions. Harold Rosenberg coined the term "action painting" in 1952 to proclaim the expressionist artist's attention to process over subject: "In this gesturing with materials the aesthetic, too, has been subordinated. Form, color, composition, drawing are auxiliaries, any one of which...can be dispensed with."[2]

But what is not readily apparent amidst the overwhelming exposure given to Abstract Expressionism around 1952 is that even as it was gaining critical and popular acclaim, a strong undercurrent of support for more traditional forms of painting was emerging. A major retrospective of the art of John Sloan was held in 1952. Established realist artists Guy Pène du Bois, Isabel Bishop, Edward Hopper, and Leon Kroll, among others, resolved to give representational artists a voice. *Reality: A Journal of Artists' Opinions* published its first issue in the spring of 1953, claiming that the increased critical emphasis on non-objective forms of painting "has produced in the whole world of art an atmosphere of irresponsibility, snobbery, and ignorance."[3] Even artists of a younger generation such as Larry Rivers and Alex Katz, while maintaining the spontaneous, gestural impulses of Abstract Expressionism, began experimenting with a new language of figuration in which the recognizable and ephemeral coalesce.

"A Year from the Collection, Circa 1952" presents a cross-section of works from this contentious moment in American art history and offers an opportunity to observe some of the surprising parallels and juxtapositions that become evident only when these works are seen side by side. In the profusion of

chronological survey exhibitions, theme shows, and retrospectives, we rarely pause to dissect a brief moment, to account for the quirky and the unusual as well as the masterpieces that together form a year's history. Drawn from the Whitney Museum's Permanent Collection, this exhibition also reflects the collecting practices of the institution at a time when the diversity of competing styles presented unprecedented challenges to a museum intent upon maintaining the long-standing acquisition philosophy of "a broad and unprejudiced point of view toward all styles and tendencies; recognition of the new and experimental, willingness to meet the artist on his own terms...."[4]

Accomplishing this ideal goal of collecting both quality and diversity proved no easy task—in many instances what today represents the art of circa 1952 in the Museum's Permanent Collection was acquired years later with the help of hindsight and increased acquisition funds. The resulting collection spans an enormous range, from the Social Realism of Raphael Soyer to the surrealistic visions of Federico Castellón; from the cool, geometric abstractions of Ilya Bolotowsky's *Blue Rectangles* to the sentimental moralizing of Philip Evergood's *Mom's Cathedral*; from the calculated interlocking forms and word plays of Stuart Davis' *Owh! in San Paõ* to the intimate, candid nature of Larry Rivers' portrait of his mother-in-law in *Berdie in a Red Shawl*.

To provide a true "inventory" of a year is to explore the reason why so many diverse styles proliferate and remain relevant at a given time. Reginald Marsh, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, and Raphael Soyer, for example, are well represented in the collection by works of the early 1950s due to the tradition of support for realist artists by the Whitney since its founding in 1931. A work such as Soyer's *The Brown Sweater*, with its underlying theme of isolation and despair so characteristic of Depression-era art, still remained surprisingly relevant in the Cold War period, with its lingering sense of disenchantment. Other artists, whose names are less well known today— Herbert Katzman and I. Rice Pereira, both of whose work exemplifies a fifties "moderne" sensibility—were at the height of their careers. Extensive articles on Katzman's art appeared in the press and his work was featured in the influential "Fifteen Americans" exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art in 1952. Pereira, with her novel geometric paintings on glass, had her first one-artist show at the Whitney in 1953.



John Marin, *Sea Piece*, 1951

For John Marin, whose career began in 1910 with his one-artist exhibition at Alfred Stieglitz's 291 gallery, 1952 ushered in a wave of popular support

His 1951 painting *Sea Piece* (now in the Permanent Collection) was illustrated as among "The Year's Best: 1952" in *Art News*, which also included Marin in a roster of the top ten one-man shows of the year. When the Wildenstein gallery organized an exhibition of seventy twentieth-century American paintings chosen by the leading art critics of the time, works by Marin were chosen by five of the seven groups of critics. The fact that his early twentieth-century modernist style has such resonance with the gestural abstraction of the early fifties no doubt accounted for his renewed popularity.

Given the Whitney Museum's traditional dedication to representational art, many of the Abstract Expressionist canvases now in the collection were not acquired until the late 1960s and 1970s. Bradley Walker Tomlin's *Number 1, 1952*, for example, purchased by the Museum in the early seventies, is a quintessential Abstract Expressionist picture of 1952. The painting is marked by highly conspicuous brushwork, a spontaneous composition revealed by drips of paint, a pattern of overlapping forms and colors, and a balanced yet dynamic composition. Of the Abstract Expressionist works of circa 1952 that the Museum purchased in the 1950s, many incorporate subtle as well as more pronounced references to landscape and figuration, displaying some of the earliest signs that these traditions were being reasserted within the expressionist idiom. Both Adolph Gottlieb's *The Frozen Sounds, Number1* and David Smith's animated sculpture *Hudson River Landscape*, though abstract, were inspired by landscape elements that the artists translated into an austere pictorial language.



Willem de Kooning, *Woman and Bicycle*, 1952–53

Willem de Kooning, whose work virtually defined first-generation Abstract Expressionism, shocked the art world by exhibiting his now famous Woman series in the early 1950s. Breaking the non-objective strictures by working simultaneously with abstract and representational elements, these works, including the Museum's *Woman and Bicycle*, symbolized for artists of the time a break into a new form of figuration. "It's really absurd to make an image, like a human image, with paint, today, when you think about it....But then, all of a sudden, it was even more absurd not to do it."[5]

As de Kooning retreated from the reductionist allure of Abstract Expressionism, others were taking a similar path by embracing popular culture and including topical references in their work. Robert Rauschenberg's *Yoicks*, while clearly incorporating the all-over painterly brushwork of Abstract Expressionism, has comic strips and brightly patterned fabric half-hidden beneath the paint segments. *Owh! in San Paõ* by Stuart Davis likewise looks ahead to Pop Art in its billboardlike appearance, use of Benday dots, and superimposed text. And even as Abstract Expressionism seemed to be producing offshoots, earlier painters persisted in developing older forms. Artists interested in the principles of Neoplasticism, such as many members of the American Abstract Artists group formed in the 1930s, continued well into the fifties to explore color relationships in geometric abstraction. Though their calculated, intellectual theorizing was in contrast to much of the expressionist work of the time, they maintained a loyal following.

Though fascinating in its diversity and worthy of focused study, 1952 is not altogether different from other moments of twentieth-century American art in which one or two prominent styles prevail in our collective consciousness. Providing a less edited inventory of a period enables us to focus attention on both the persistence of certain art movements beyond their retrospectively prescribed time frames and on the origins and potential sources of art to come. Indeed, following John Baur's perception, the concept behind "A Year from the Collection, Circa 1952" can be seen as emblematic of much twentieth-century American art.

Beth Venn, Assistant Curator

1 John I.H. Baur, *The Face of the Fifties: Recent Painting and Sculpture from the Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art*, exhibition catalogue (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Museum of Art, 1961), n.p.

2 Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters," *Art News*, 51 (December 1952), p. 23.

3 "Statement," *Reality: A Journal of Artists' Opinions*, 1 (Spring 1953), p. 1.

4 Hermon More, *Loan Exhibition of Seventy XX Century American Paintings*, exhibition catalogue (New York: Wildenstein Gallery, 1952), foreword.

5 "Content Is a Glimpse. .," excerpts from an interview with David Sylvester of the BBC, reprinted from *Location*, 1 (Spring 1963), in Thomas B. Hess, *Willem de Kooning*, exhibition catalogue (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1968), p. 148.

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Unless otherwise indicated, works are from the Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art. Dimensions are in inches; height precedes width precedes depth. Sight refers to dimensions taken within the frame or mat opening.

Samuel M. Adler (1898–1979)
Invocation, 1952
Oil on composition board, 42 x 30
Purchase 53.1

Josef Albers (1888–1976)
Homage to the Square: "Ascending," 1953
Oil on composition board, 43 1/2 x 43 1/2
Purchase 54.34

Milton Avery (1885–1965)
Three Birds, 1952
Woodcut: sheet, 12 1/8 x 27 5/8;
image, 9 5/8 x 25
Purchase, with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Michael H. Irving 71.182

Peggy Bacon (1895–1987)
Big News, 1952
Drypoint: sheet, 12 1/16 x 13 7/16;
plate, 6 15/16 x 7 13/16
Katherine Schmidt Shubert Bequest 84.73.1

Leonard Baskin (b. 1922)
The Old Man, Number 2, c. 1950
Ink on paper, 10 3/8 x 7 1/4 (sight)
Gift of Virginia F. and William R. Salomon 64.62

William Baziotes (1912–1963)
Sea Forms, 1951
Pastel on paper on masonite, 38 1/8 x 25 1/8
Purchase 52.19

Isabel Bishop (1902–1988)
Outdoor Soda Fountain, 1953
Etching: sheet, 12 7/8 x 9 7/8;
plate, 6 1/4 x 4 3/16
Gift of the artist and Associated American Artists 78.43.7

Sweet Sixteen, 1954
Etching: sheet, 13 x 10; plate, 5 7/8 x 3 15/16
Gift of the artist and Sylvan Cole Gallery 85.45.6

Peter Blume (1906–1992)
Man of Sorrows, 1951
Tempera on canvas, 28 x 24
Purchase 51.5

Ilya Bolotowsky (1907–1981)
Large Vertical 51/59, 1951-59
Oil on canvas, 95 1/4 x 40 1/2
Purchase, with funds from Mr. and Mrs. N.E. Waldman 59.48

Blue Rectangles, 1953
Oil on canvas, 34 x 42
Purchase 56.1

Margaret Bourke-White (1904–1971)
Migrating Snow Geese, 1952
Gelatin silver print mounted on paperboard:
image, 9 5/8 x 13 7/16
Gift of Sean Callahan 92.56

San Jacinto Monument from a Helicopter, Texas, 1952
Gelatin silver print mounted on paperboard:
image, 10 1/2 x 13 7/16
Gift of Sean Callahan 92.57

David Burliuk (1882–1967)
St. Mark's Place, 1951–52
Oil on canvas, 26 x 34
Gift of Sidney Elliott Cohn 54.1

Paul Cadmus (b. 1904)
Finistere, 1952
Egg tempera on composition board,
10 x 13 1/2
Gift of an anonymous donor 64.41

Victor Candell (1903–1977)
Ascendant, 1952
Oil on canvas, 60 x 32
Purchase 53.4

Federico Castellón (1914–1971)
Conversation Piece, c. 1949
Etching: sheet, 11 3/8 x 9 1/8;
plate, 8 x 5 15/16
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Weiss 79.66.17

Untitled, c. 1952
Oil on panel, 15 x 19 1/2 (sight)
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Weiss 79.69

Joseph Cornell (1903–1972)
Hôtel du Nord, c. 1953
Box construction: wood, glass, collaged printed paper, and painted wood, 19 1/4 x 13 1/4 x 5 1/2
Purchase 57.6

Ralston Crawford (1906–1978)
Cologne Landscape #7, 1952
Lithograph: sheet, 12 7/8 x 19 3/4; image, 10 x 16 1/2
Gift of Charles Simon 71.78

Cologne Landscape #10, 1952
Lithograph: sheet, 19 11/16 x 12 13/16; image, 17 1/4 x 10 1/8
Gift of Charles Simon 71.81

Stuart Davis (1892–1964)
Owh! in San Pañ , 1951
Oil on canvas, 52 1/4 x 41 3/4
Purchase 52.2

Willem de Kooning (b. 1904)
Landscape, Abstract, c. 1949
Oil on paper mounted on board, 19 x 25 1/2
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alan H. Temple 68.96

Woman and Bicycle, 1952–53
Oil on canvas, 76 1/2 x 49
Purchase 55.35

Alexander Dobkin (1908–1975)
The Subway, 1952–59
Oil on canvas, 33 x 47 1/4
Purchase, with funds from the Living Arts Foundation Fund 60.1

Philip Evergood (1901–1973)
Mom's Cathedral, c. 1951
Oil on canvas, 36 x 46
Gift of L. Arnold Weissberger in memory of his mother, Anna Weissberger 76.10

Lee Gatch (1902–1968)
Jumping Joy, 1952
Oil on canvas, 31 1/2 x 31 1/2 (sight)
Purchase, with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Roy R. Neuberger 52.14

Adolph Gottlieb (1903–1974)
The Frozen Sounds, Number I, 1951
Oil on canvas, 36 x 48
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel M. Kootz, Jr. 57.3

Unstill Life, 1952
Oil on canvas, 36 x 48
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Jaretzki, Jr. 56.25

John D. Graham (1887–1961)
Kali Yuga, c. 1952
Oil, casein, chalk, and ink on cardboard, 25 x 20 3/4
Collection of Richard S. Zeisler

Robert Greco (1923–1965)
Hermetic Retreats, 1951
Oil on canvas, 40 x 30
Purchase, with funds from the Juliana Force Purchase Award 52.5

Balcomb Greene (1904–1990)
Composition: The Storm, 1953–54
Oil on canvas, 36 1/4 x 48
Purchase 55.4

Chaim Gross (1904–1991)
Acrobat on Unicycle, c. 1950
Wood, 8 3/4 x 3 1/4 x 3 1/4
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Weiss 91.50.3

Philip Guston (1913–1980)
Ink Drawing, 1952, 1952
Ink on paper, 18 5/8 x 23 5/8
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 61.23

David Hare (1917–1992)
Juggler, 1950–51
Steel, 78 7/8 x 24 3/8 x 17 1/2 (overall)
Purchase 51.34

Edward Hopper (1882–1967)
Study for *Morning Sun*, 1952
Conté on paper, 12 x 19
Josephine N. Hopper Bequest 70.245

Study for *Morning Sun*, 1952
Conté on paper, 12 x 19
Josephine N. Hopper Bequest 70.290

Alex Katz (b. 1927)
Untitled, 1951
Oil on gessoed masonite, 23 7/8 x 35 7/8
Gift of the artist 93.118

Herbert Katzman (b. 1923)
Two Nudes Before Japanese Screen, 1952
Oil on composition board, 76 x 43
Purchase, with funds from the Juliana Force Purchase Award 53.5

Yasuo Kuniyoshi (1889–1953)
Sketch for Fakirs, c. 1951
Graphite on paper, 16 7/8 x 12 9/16
Gift of Mrs. Sara Mazo Kuniyoshi 58.14

Juggler, 1952
Ink on cardboard, 22 x 28 (sight)
Purchase 53.37

Work at Dawn, 1952
Ink on paper, 18 x 28 (sight)
Gift of Mrs. Sara Mazo Kuniyoshi in honor of Lloyd Goodrich 70.43

Edward Laning (1906–1981)
Mannequin, c. 1950
Gouache and graphite on paper, 12 3/4 x 9 1/8
Katherine Schmidt Shubert Bequest 84.73.7

Jack Levine (b. 1915)
Gangster Funeral, 1952–53
Oil on canvas, 63 x 72
Purchase 53.42

Roy Lichtenstein (b. 1923)
Indian with Pony, 1953
Woodcut: sheet, 17 x 10 3/8 (irregular); image, 9 3/8 x 8 7/16
Purchase, with funds from the Print Committee 83.11

Richard Lindner (1901–1978)
The Child's Dream, 1952
Oil on canvas, 49 3/4 x 30
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore V. Marsters 61.10

Seymour Lipton (1903–1986)
Thunderbird, 1951–52
Bronze on steel, 36 1/2 long
Purchase, with funds from the Wildenstein Benefit Purchase Fund 53.18

Howard Mandel (b. 1917)
The Blessing, 1952
Casein on composition board, 19 3/4 x 24
Purchase, with funds from the Wildenstein Benefit Purchase Fund 53.23

John Marin (1870–1953)
Sea Piece, 1951
Oil on canvas, 22 x 28
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 57.29

Reginald Marsh (1898–1954)
Beach Scene, 1952
Ink and graphite on paper, 21 1/8 x 30 1/8
Felicia Meyer Marsh Bequest 80.31.12a

Matinee, 1952
Oil on panel, 48 x 12
Felicia Meyer Marsh Bequest 80.31.14

Alice Trumbull Mason (1904–1971)
White Current, 1952
Color woodcut: sheet, 12 3/8 x 8; image, 6 7/8 x 7
Purchase, with funds from the Print Committee 85.40

John McLaughlin (1898–1976)
Untitled (Geometric Abstraction), 1953
Oil on panel, 32 x 38
Promised gift of Beth and James DeWoody P.1.86

Walter Murch (1907–1967)
Governor, II, 1952
Oil on paper over masonite, 40 3/8 x 17 3/4
Purchase, with funds from the Wildenstein Benefit Purchase Fund 53.11

Alfonso Ossorio (1916–1990)
Untitled, c. 1950
Encaustic on paper, 16 3/4 x 5 (sight)
Gift of an anonymous donor 74.122

I. Rice Pereira (1902–1971)
You, 1951
Front plane: mixed media on glass; back plane: tempera and metal leaf on gesso panel, 30 x 23
Purchase, with funds from an anonymous donor 62.47

Jackson Pollock (1912–1956)
Untitled, c. 1950
Ink on paper, 18 7/8 x 24 3/4
Purchase, with funds from the Julia B. Engel Purchase Fund and the Drawing Committee 85.21

Richard Pousette-Dart (1916–1992)
The Magnificent, 1950–51
Oil on canvas, 86 1/4 x 44
Gift of Mrs. Ethel K. Schwabacher 53.43

Robert Rauschenberg (b. 1925)
CY + RELICS-ROME, 1952
Gelatin silver print, 16 x 20 (sight)
Gift of the artist and Pace/MacGill Gallery 93.57

Yoicks, 1953
Oil, fabric, and paper on canvas, 96 x 72
Gift of the artist 71.210

Ad Reinhardt (1913–1967)
Number 17—1953, 1953
Oil and tempera on canvas, 77 3/4 x 77 3/4
Purchase 55.36

Larry Rivers (b. 1923)
Berdie in a Red Shawl, 1953
Oil on canvas, 53 x 65
Lawrence H. Bloedel Bequest 77.1.44

Attilio Salemme (1911–1955)
Inquisition, 1952
Oil on canvas, 40 x 63
Purchase 53.26

Charles Sheeler (1883–1965)
Aerial Gyrations, 1953
Gouache on glass, 9 3/4 x 7
Gift of The Edith Gregor Halpert Foundation in memory of Edith Gregor Halpert 75.9

Esphyr Slobodkina (b. 1914)
Composition with White Ovals, 1952
Oil on composition board, 34 1/2 x 20 3/4
Purchase 53.6

Raphael Soyer (1899–1987)
The Brown Sweater, 1952
Oil on canvas, 50 x 34
Purchase, and gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, by exchange 53.53

Theodoros Stamos (b. 1922)
Greek Orison, 1952
Oil on canvas, 67 x 27
Purchase 53.15

Saul Steinberg (b. 1914)
Railroad Station, 1952
Ink on paper, 19 1/2 x 24
Purchase, with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Carl L. Selden 59.44

Myron Stout (1908–1987)
Untitled, c. 1953–61
Charcoal on paper, 25 x 19
50th Anniversary Gift of Sanford Schwartz 80.11

Bradley Walker Tomlin (1899–1953)
Number 1, 1952, 1952
Oil on canvas, 79 x 46
Purchase, with funds from Susan Morse Hilles 73.12

Martha Visser't Hooft (b. 1906)
Cry of the Juke Box, 1951–52
Oil on canvas, 48 x 34
Purchase, with funds from the Wildenstein Benefit Purchase Fund 53.7

Nat Werner (1907–1991)
Forbidden Fruit, 1952
Serpentine marble on wood base, 14 3/4 x 9 5/8 x 9 3/4 (overall)
Purchase, with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Jack I. Poses 54.8a-b

Charles White (1918–1979)
Preacher, 1952
Ink on cardboard, 21 3/8 x 29 3/8 (sight)
Purchase 52.25

Works in the exhibition are subject to change.

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